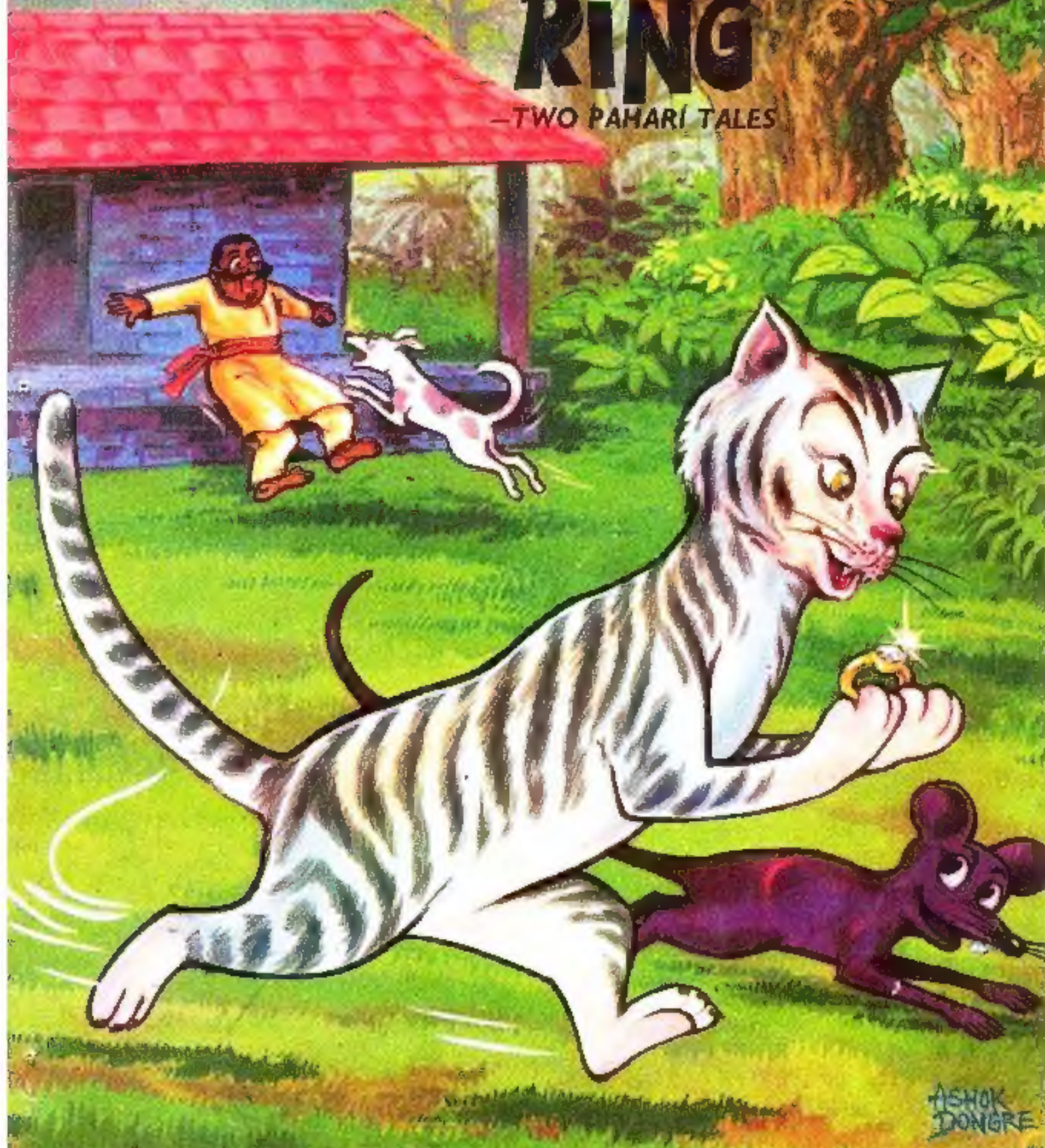




No. 307 Rs

# THE BRIDEGROOM'S RING

—TWO PAHARI TALES



ASHOK  
DONGRE



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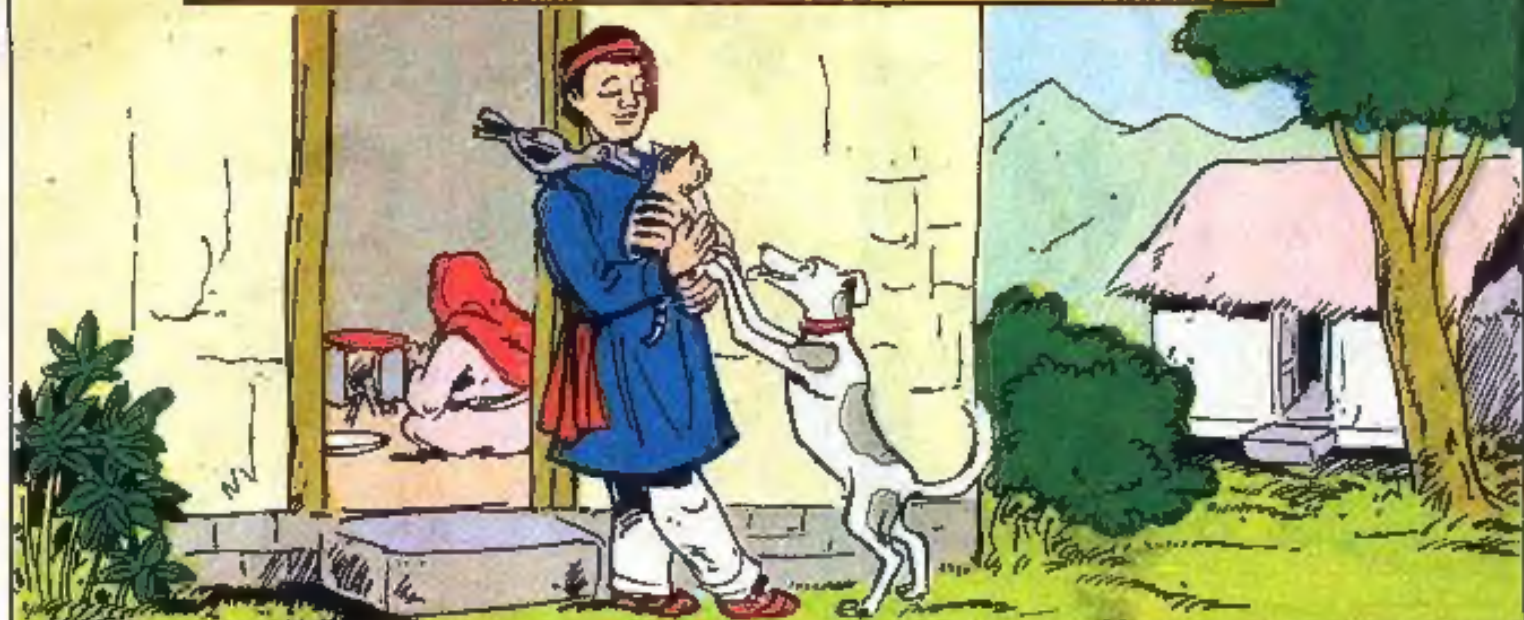
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# THE BRIDEGROOM'S RING



YOUNG BHOLA LIVED IN A LITTLE HUT WITH HIS MOTHER AND HIS PETS, A CAT, A DOG AND A CROW.

ONE DAY BHOLA AND HIS FRIENDS SET OUT TO HUNT. SUDDENLY, THE CROW WHO WAS FLYING AHEAD OF THEM...



...BEGAN TO CIRCLE EXCITEDLY ROUND AN OBJECT ON THE GROUND.



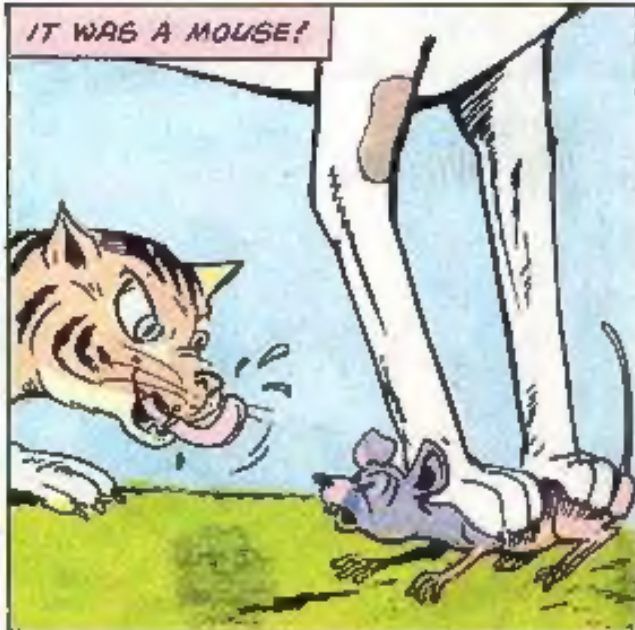
THE DOG RAN AHEAD OF THE OTHERS...



...AND POUNCED ON THE OBJECT.



IT WAS A MOUSE!





AS THE CAT WAS ABOUT TO STRIKE...



...IT FOUND ITSELF LIFTED OFF THE GROUND.



I'M SORRY, DEAR. I WON'T LET YOU HARM THE LITTLE ONE.



BHOLA GENTLY DROPPED THE CAT...



...AND PICKED UP THE FRIGHTENED MOUSE.



I'M TAKING YOU HOME.



SOON —

MOTHER, SEE WHAT I'VE BROUGHT FOR YOU!

A MOUSE!



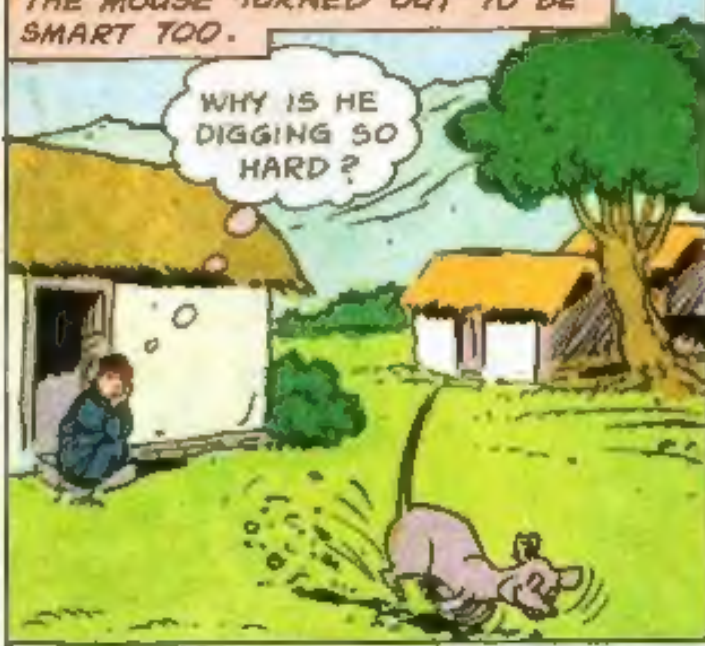
HE IS SO CUTE!





THE MOUSE TURNED OUT TO BE SMART TOO.

WHY IS HE DIGGING SO HARD?



THE MOUSE SEEMED TO BE AN EXPERT TREASURE-HUNTER.



SOON BHOLA AND HIS MOTHER WERE ABLE TO MOVE INTO A BIG HOUSE!













BHOLA TURNED TO HIS ANIMAL FRIENDS —



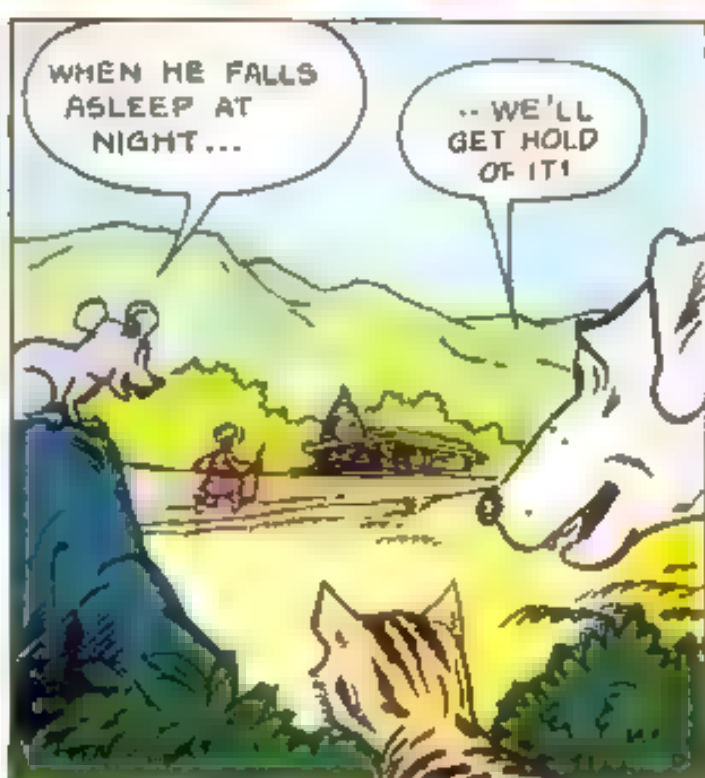
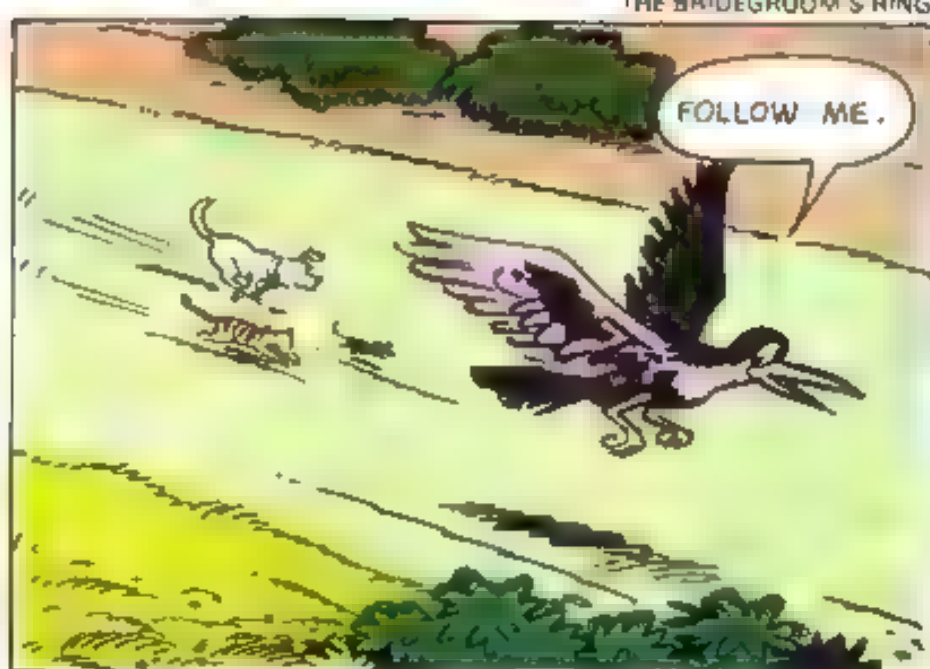




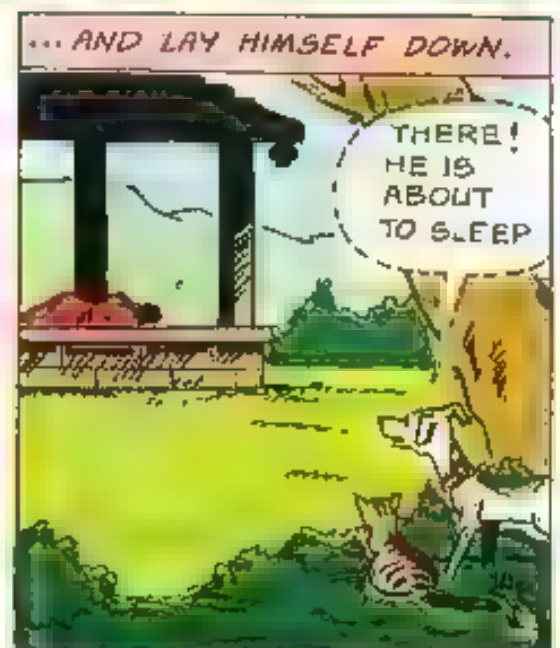
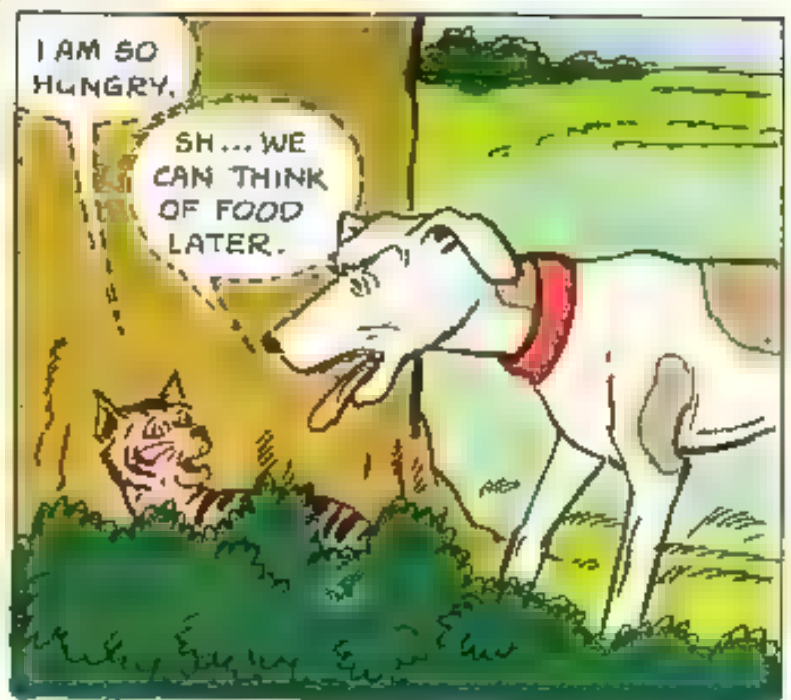
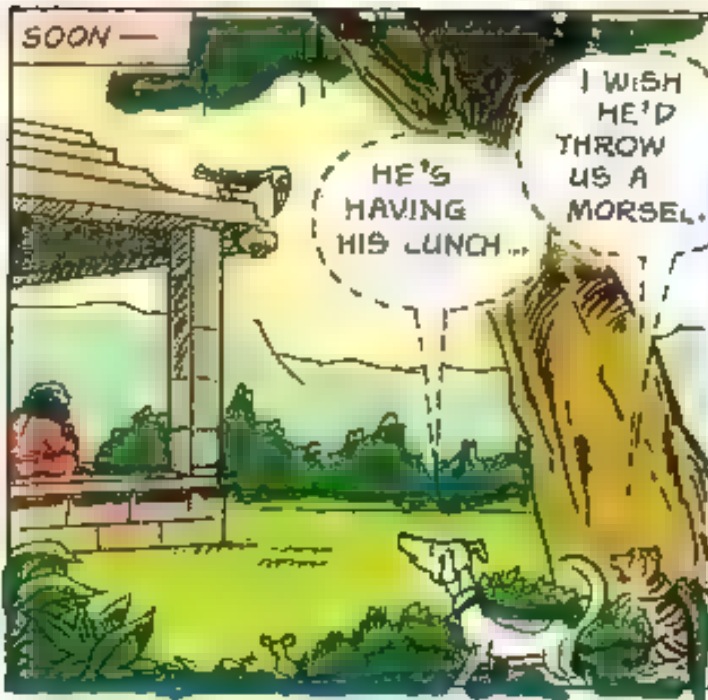






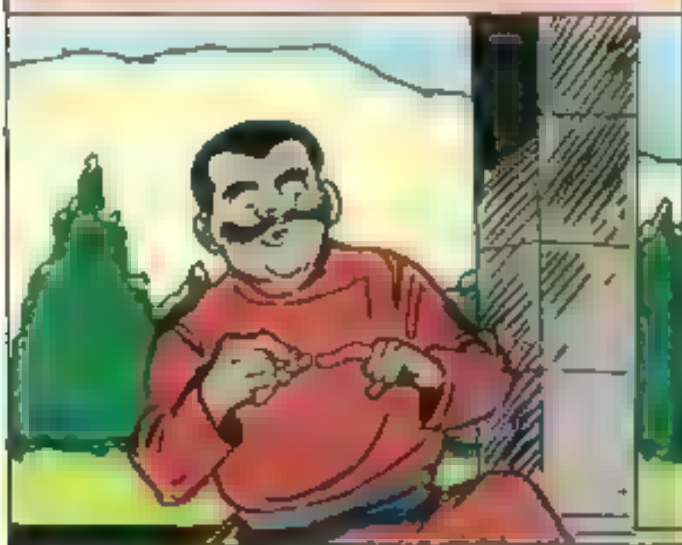








HE TOOK IT OFF HIS FINGER...

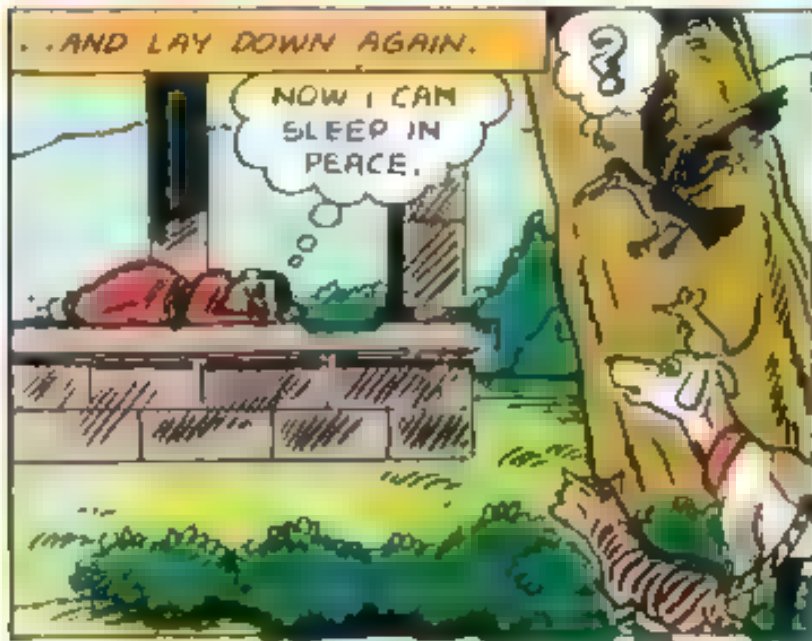


...PUT IT INTO HIS MOUTH...



...AND LAY DOWN AGAIN.

NOW I CAN  
SLEEP IN  
PEACE.



WHO WILL  
SNATCH  
THE RING?

I WILL



WHAT?

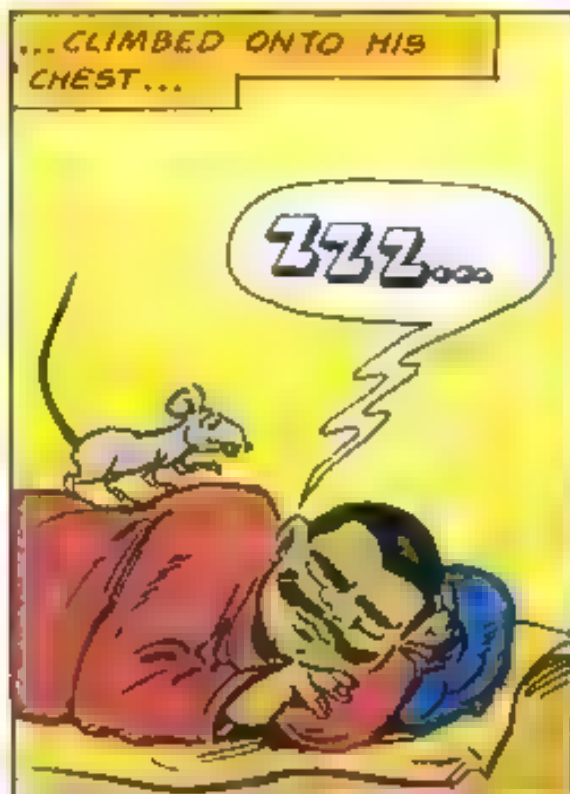
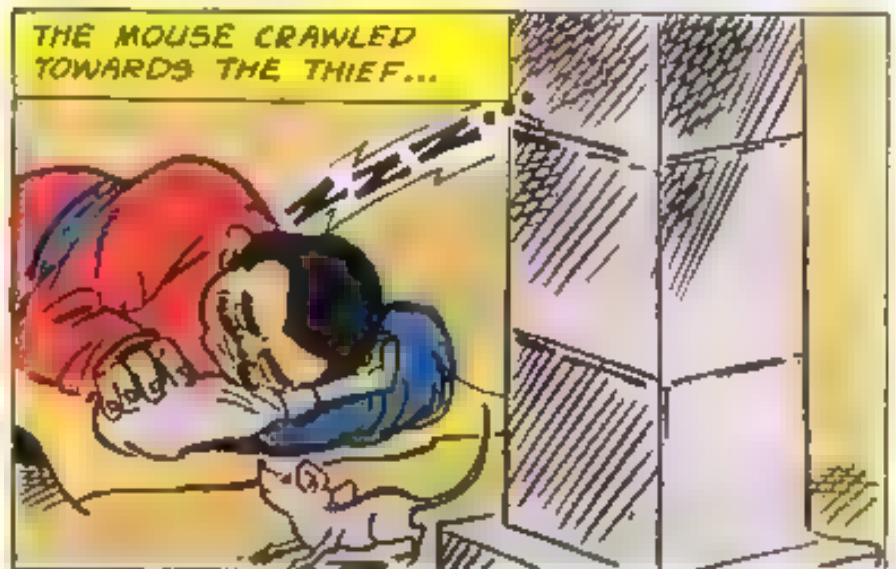


YOU MEAN  
YOU'LL GO INTO  
HIS MOUTH  
AND...

NO! I DON'T  
MEAN THAT  
AT ALL.



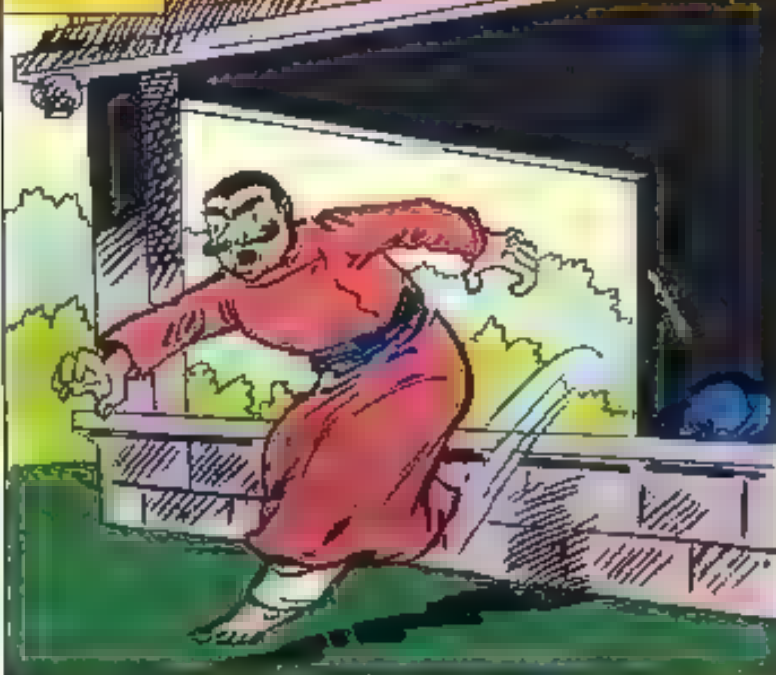








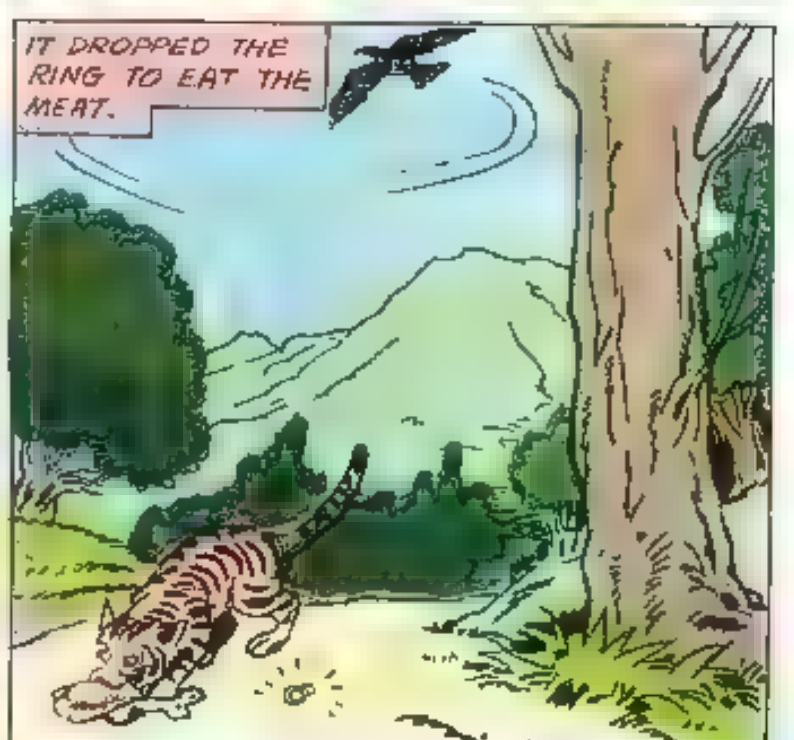
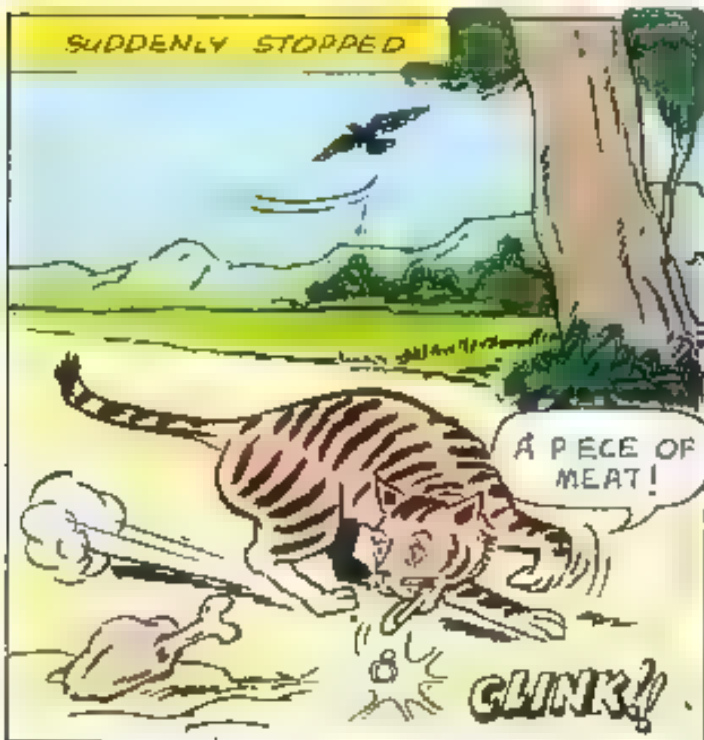
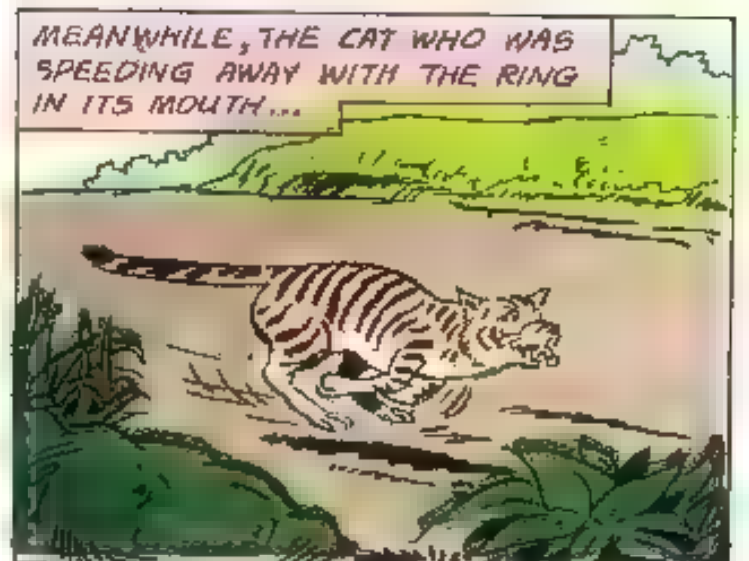
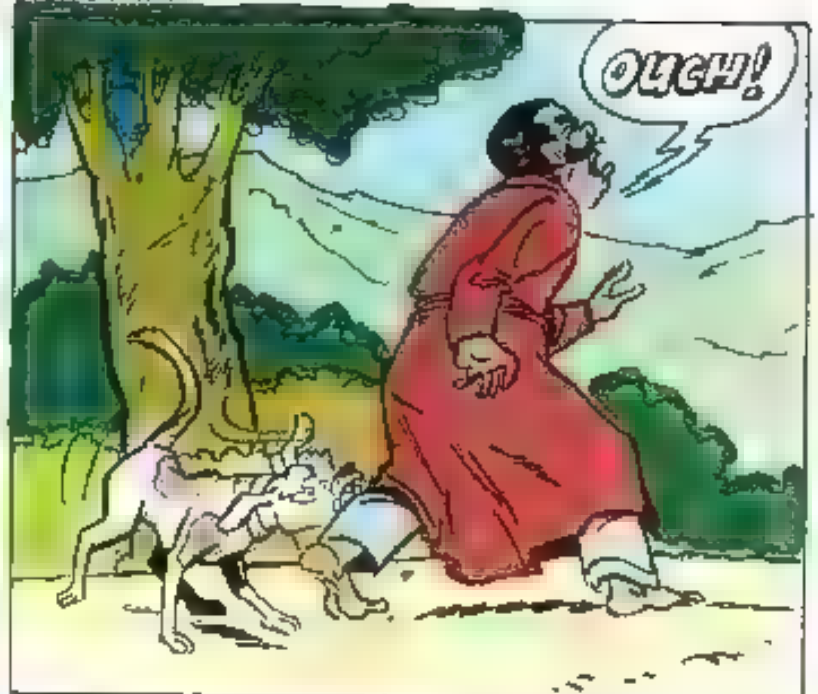
AS HE LEAPT TOWARDS THE FLEEING CAT ..



... HE WAS MET HEAD ON BY THE DOG.





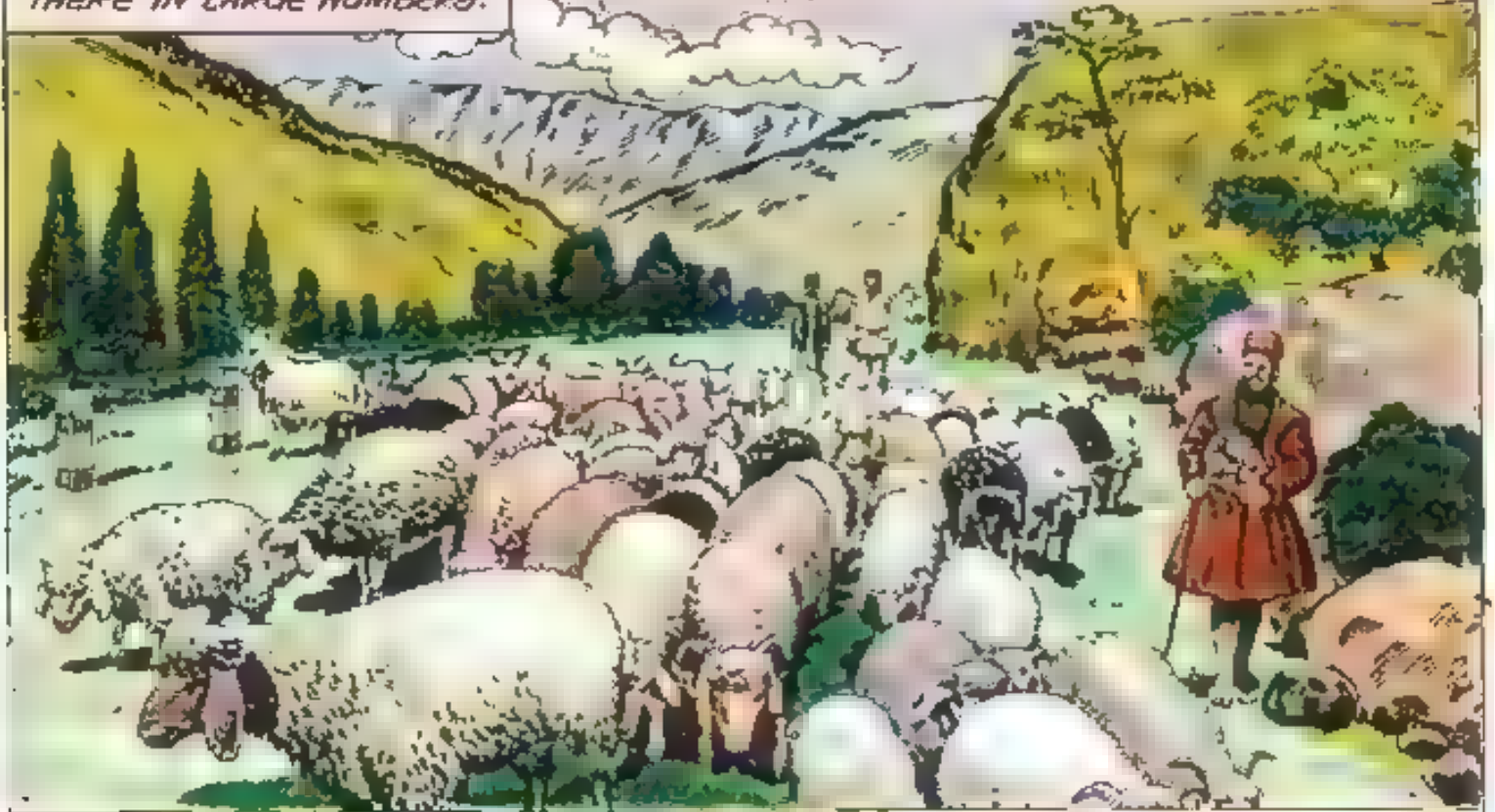




## HIMACHAL PRADESH THE VALLEY OF THE GODS

Script - Swarn Khandpur  
Illustrated by S K Parab

HIMACHAL PRADESH, AS THE NAME SUGGESTS, LIES IN THE HIMALAYAS. ITS HILLS AND VALLEYS PROVIDE RICH PASTURES FOR THE SHEEP AND GOATS THAT ARE REARED THERE IN LARGE NUMBERS.

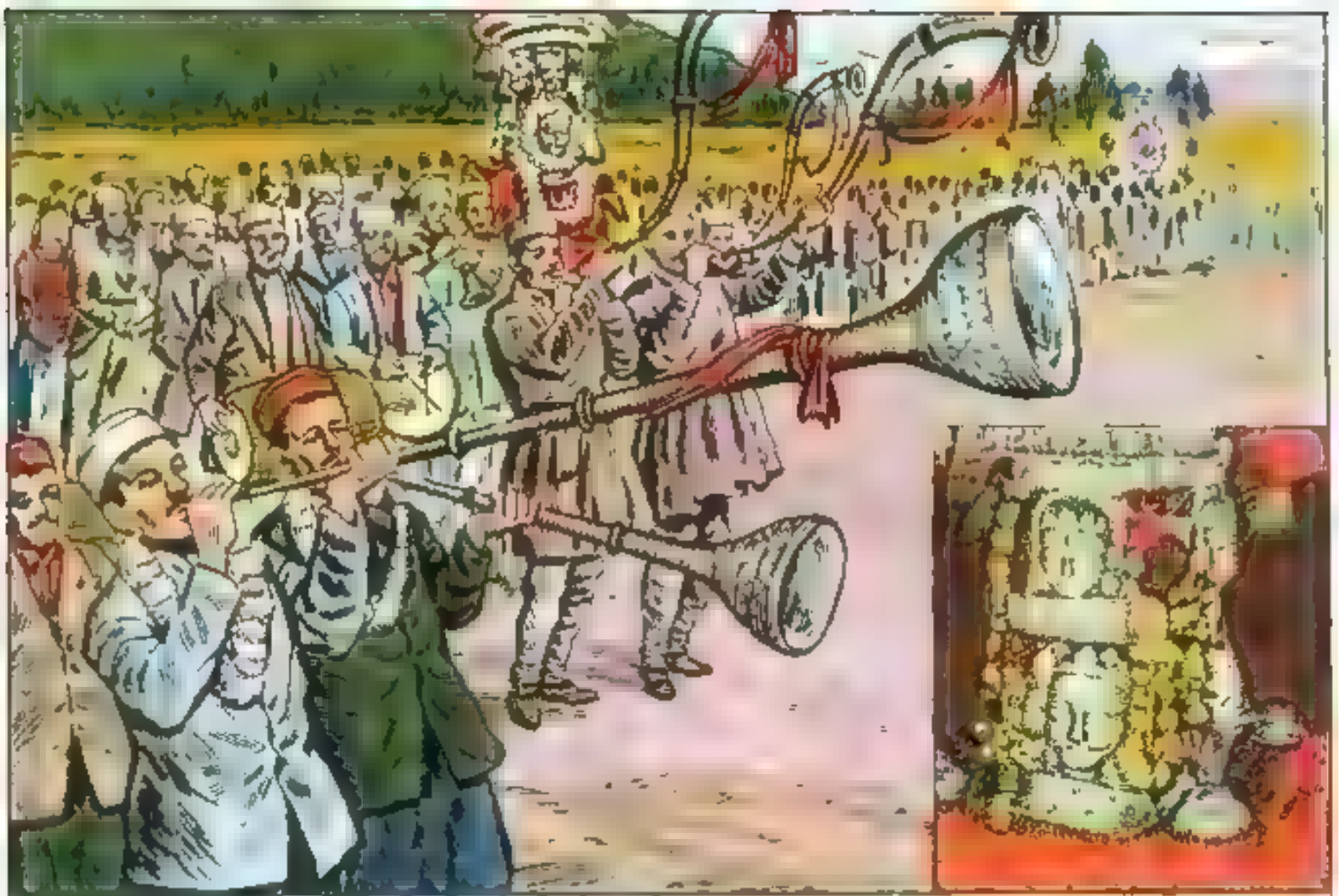


IT IS THE 'APPLE STATE' OF INDIA. HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF HEAVILY-LADEN APPLE TREES DOT THE COUNTRYSIDE. APPLE ORCHARDS COVER SOME 10,00,000 HECTARES OF LAND IN THE STATE, AND EVERY YEAR MORE THAN 75,00,000 BOXES OF LUSCIOUS APPLES—GOLDEN, RED AND ROYAL DELICIOUS—ARE SENT OUT.



APPLES WERE INTRODUCED INTO THE STATE IN 1920 BY AN AMERICAN MISSIONARY, SAMUEL EVANS STOKES, WHO LATER TOOK THE NAME OF SATYANAND. HE ADOPTED THE HINDU WAY OF LIFE AND SETTLED DOWN IN KOTBARI. HIS PIONEERING WORK IN THE SCIENTIFIC CULTIVATION OF APPLES GAVE THE POOR PEASANTS UNDREAMT OF PROSPERITY.





SOCIAL MEETINGS ARE NOT EASY IN THE HILLS. BUT FAIRS AND FESTIVALS ARE OCCASIONS FOR FUN AND FROLIC

THE DUSSEHRA FESTIVAL AT KULU IS ONE SUCH OCCASION FOR BOTH GODS AND MEN. IN GAILY DECORATED PALANQUINS MINOR DEITIES FROM THE NEIGHBOURING VILLAGES COME OUT OF THEIR TEMPLES FOR A 'DURBAR' WITH RAGHUNATHJI, THE MAIN DEITY OF THE VALLEY OF KULU.

THE 'VALLEY OF THE GODS' THEN REVERBERATES WITH THE BEATING OF DRUMS, SONGS AND DANCES.





IT IS IN THESE FAIRS THAT TRADING IS DONE. EXQUISITELY DESIGNED SHAWLS, WOODEN VESSELS AND METALWARE ARE BOUGHT AND SOLD HERE. THESE OBJECTS OF UTILITY AND BEAUTY ARE THE CREATIONS OF THE INGENIOUS ARTISANS OF THE REGION.

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL OF THEM ALL IS THE EMBROIDERED CHAMBA RUMAAL. ALTHOUGH LITERALLY 'RUMAAL' MEANS A HANDKERCHIEF, THE CHAMBA RUMAAL IS MUCH LARGER. IT FORMS AN IMPORTANT PART OF A BRIDE'S TROUSSEAU.





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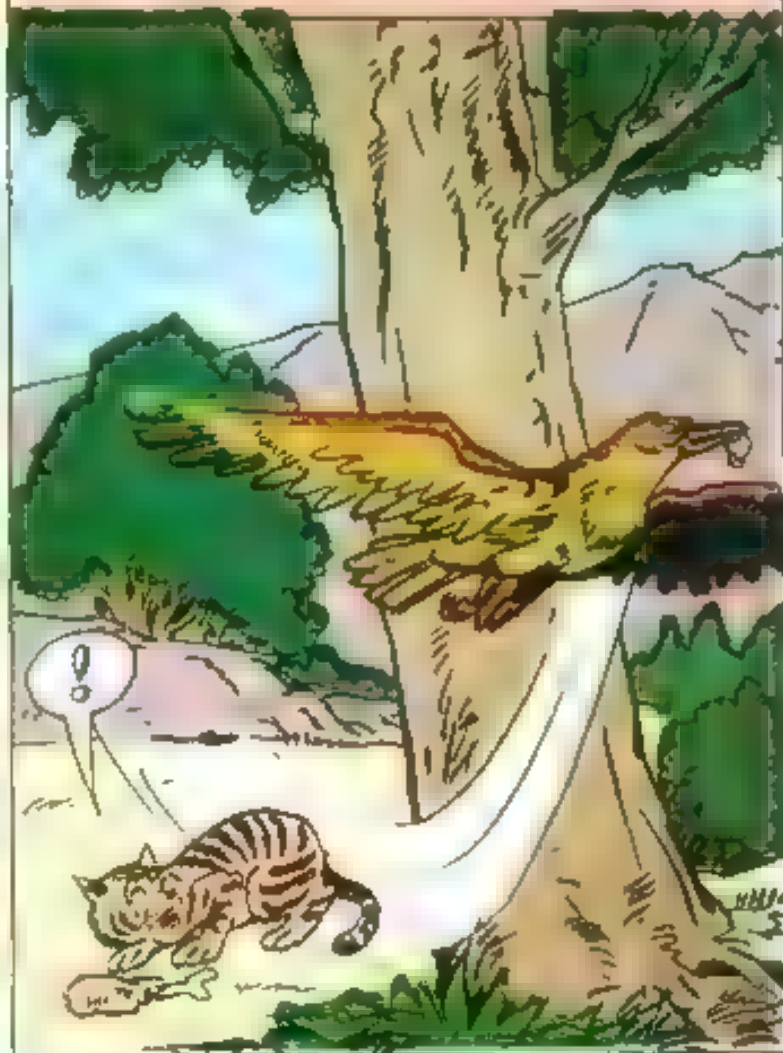
**Toys that care.  
Because you care**



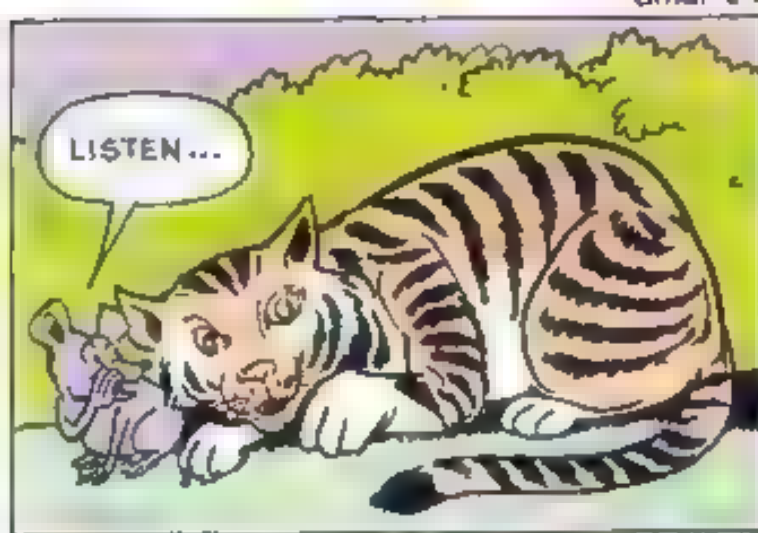
EVEN AS ITS TEETH SANK INTO THE MEAT, A HAWK SWOOPED DOWN..



...AND FLEW AWAY WITH THE RING









AS THE CAT PICKED UP THE RING THE DOG CAME ALONG.



THE CROW TOLD THE DOG THE WHOLE STORY.



SO, THE DOG TOOK CHARGE OF THE RING AND THE FRIENDS BEGAN THEIR HOMEWARD JOURNEY.



THEY HAD TO CROSS THE RIVER AGAIN TO REACH THEIR MASTER.



ON THE WAY THE DOG SWALLOWED SOME WATER.

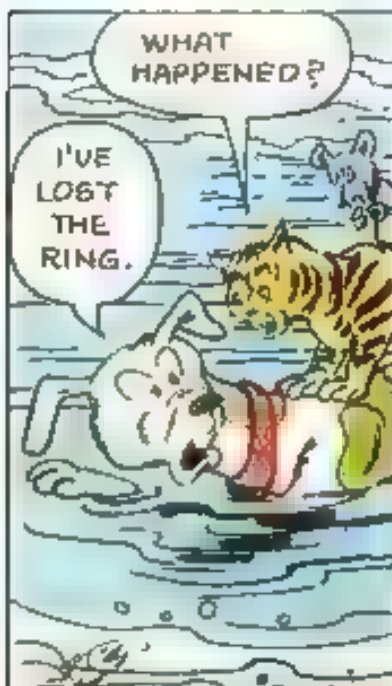


AS IT SPAT THE WATER OUT —



WHAT HAPPENED?

I'VE LOST THE RING.



NEVER MIND. WE'LL GET IT BACK

HOW?

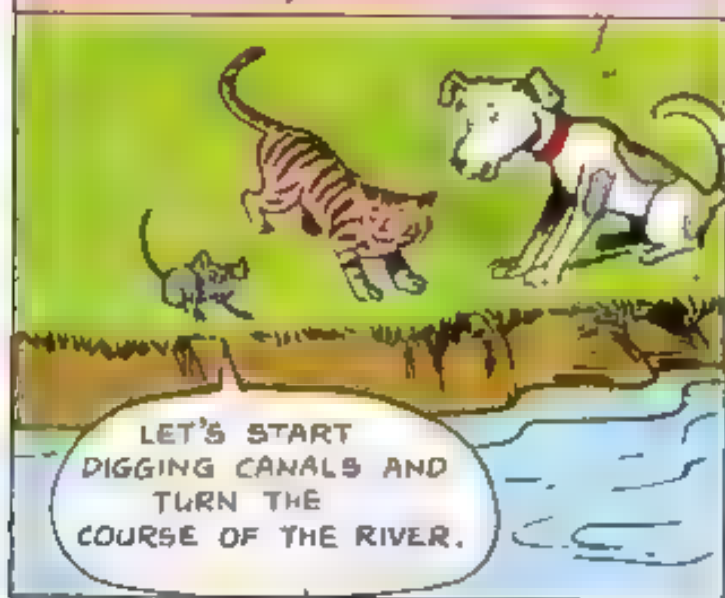


FIRST, LET'S REACH THE BANK.

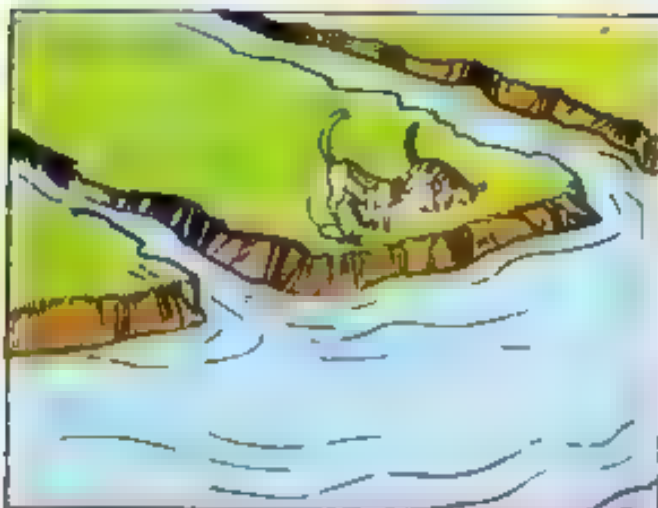
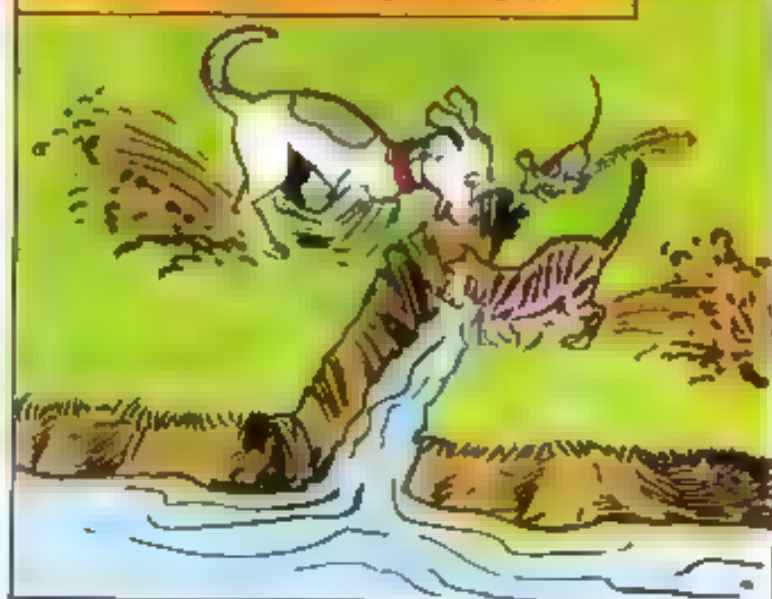




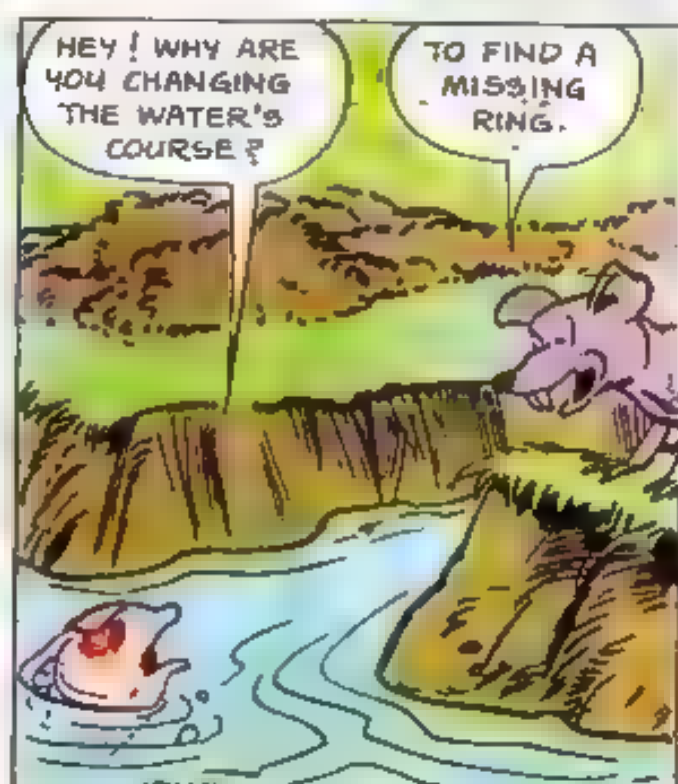
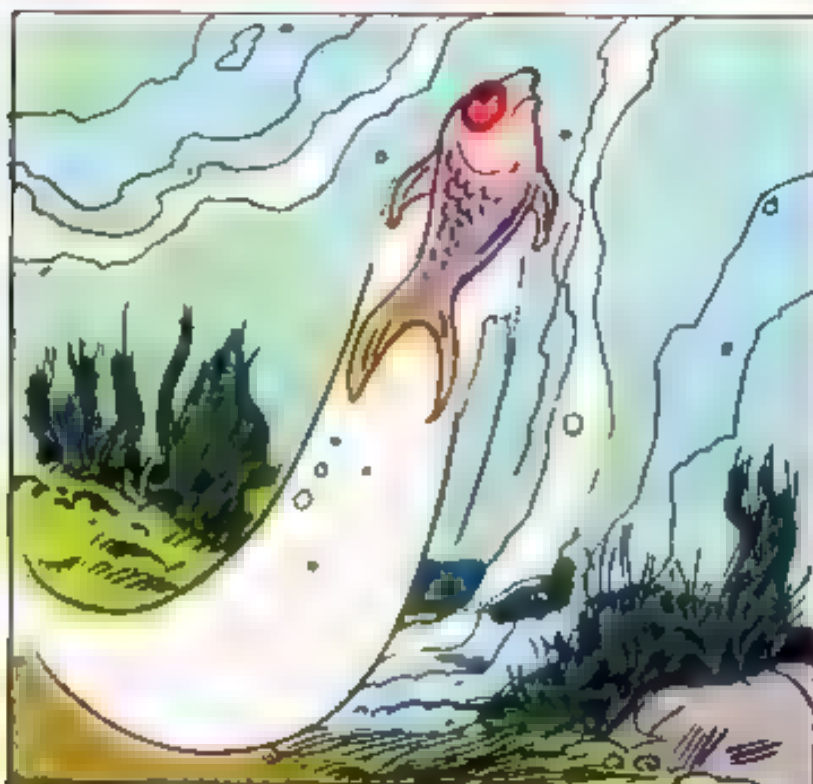
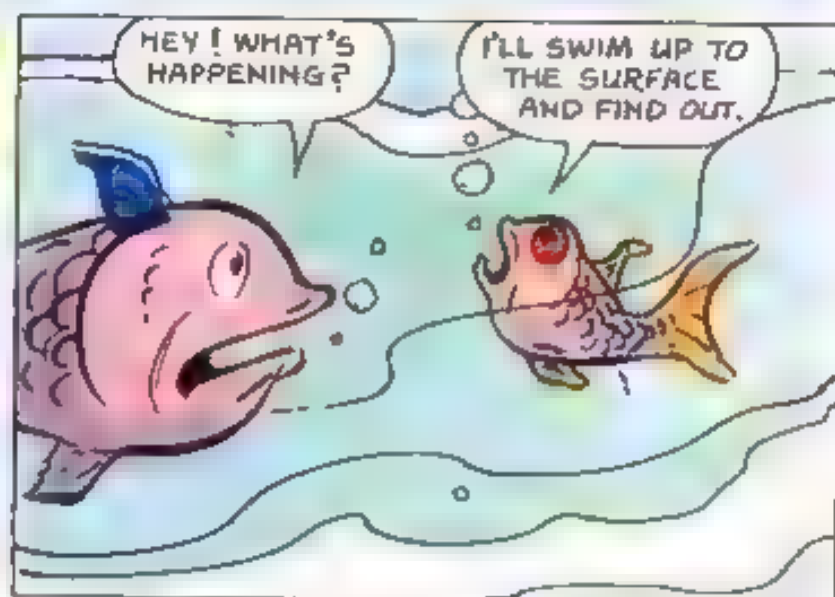
AS SOON AS THEY REACHED THE BANK—



THE FRIENDS WORKED HARD...



...AND SLOWLY, BUT STEADILY, THE WATER STARTED FLOWING OUT.

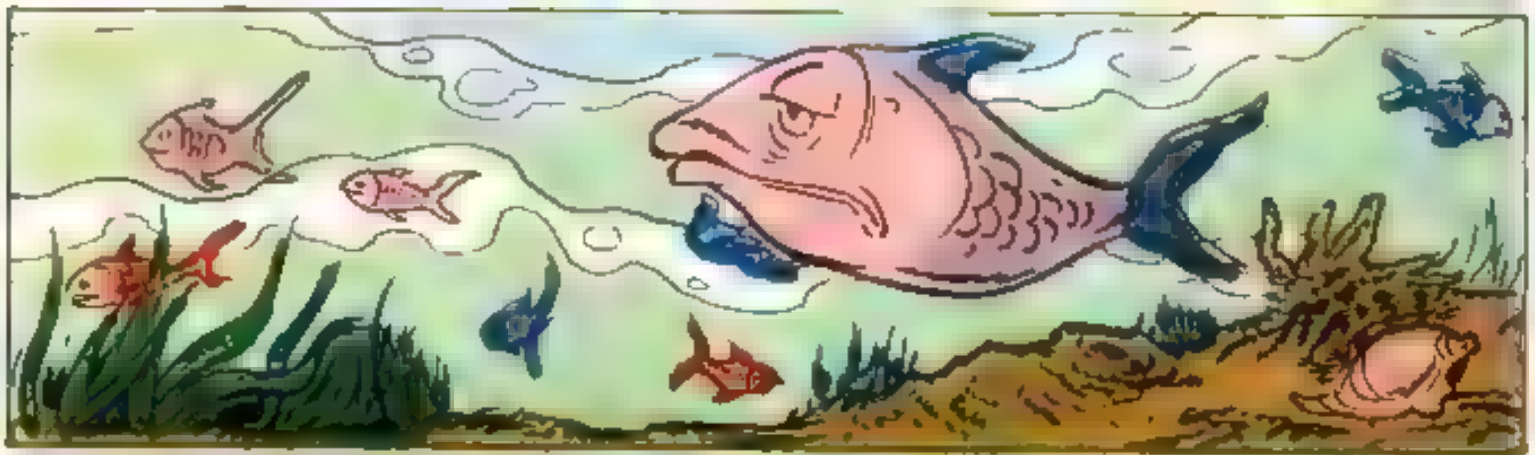




THE FISH SWAM DOWN WITH THE NEWS.

THEY ARE CHANGING THE COURSE TO FIND A CURSED RING

FIND THE RING AND BRING IT TO ME!



SOON A SMALL FISH BROUGHT THE RING TO THE CHIEF.

GIVE IT TO ME.

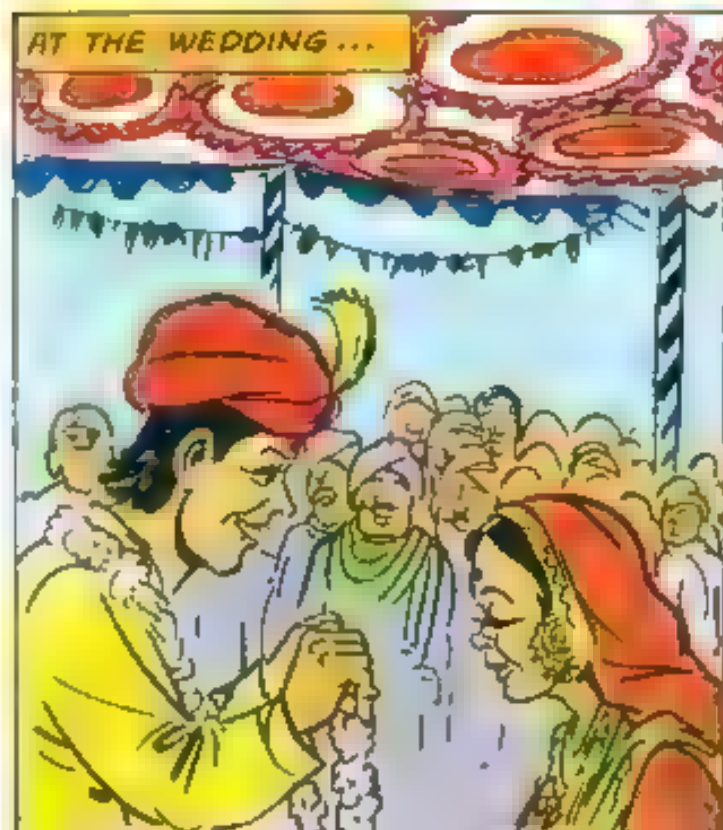
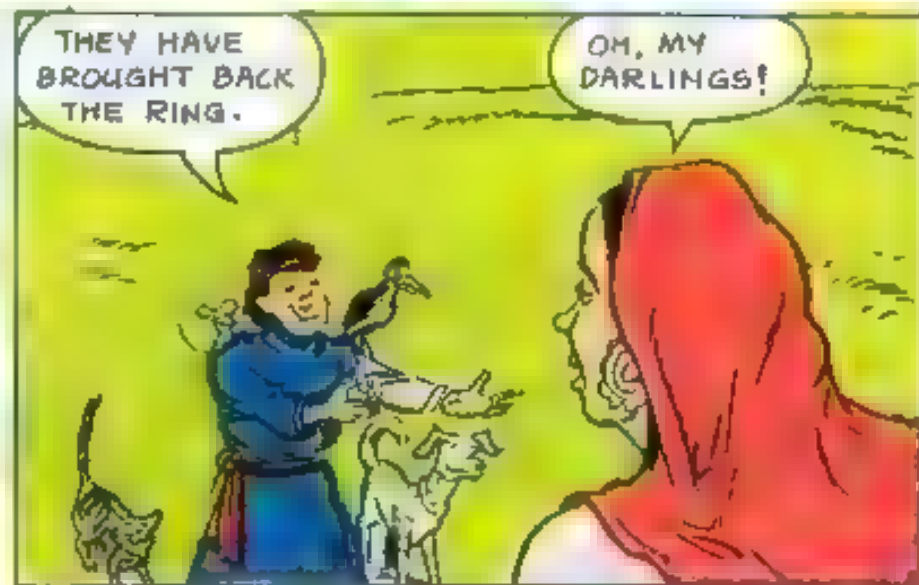
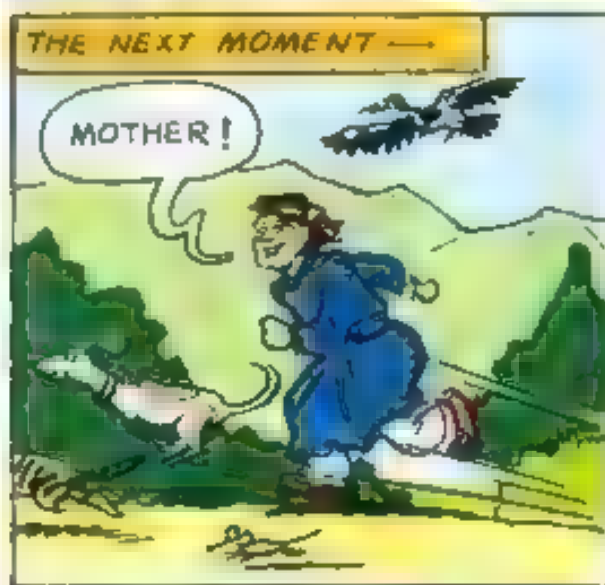
THE CHIEF SHOT UP CARRYING THE RING.

...AND OFFERED IT TO THE MOUSE

WILL YOU LEAVE OUR RIVER ALONE NOW?

OF COURSE, WE WILL.



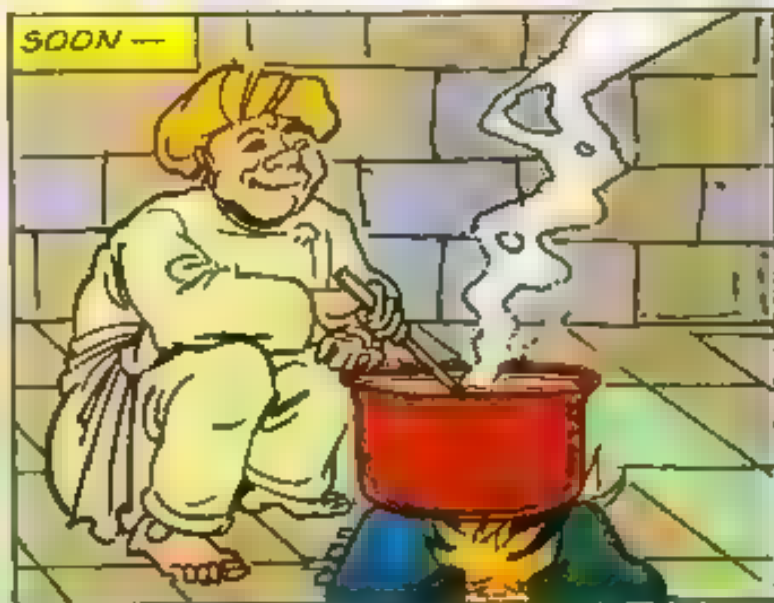
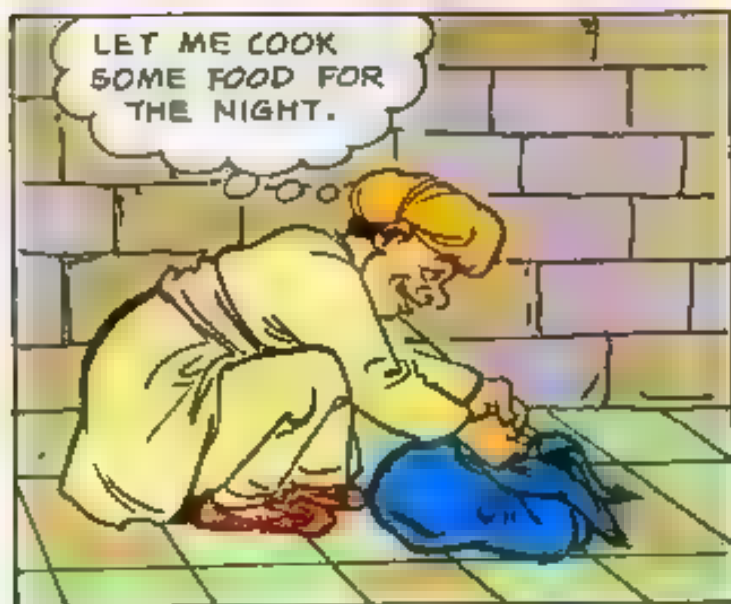
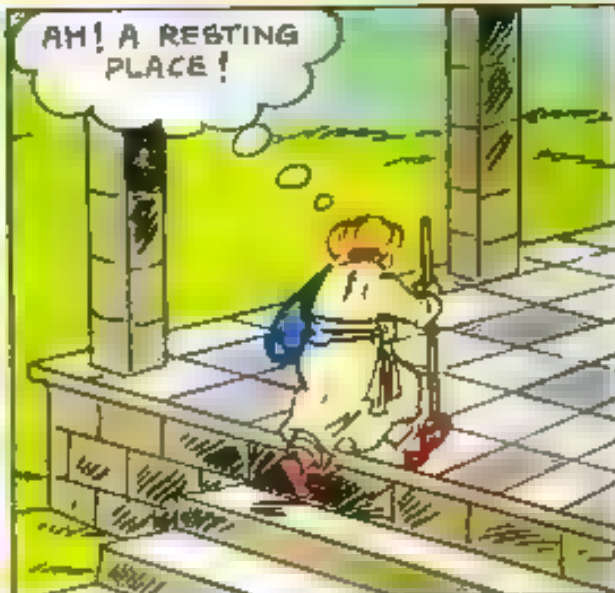




# THE KAYASTHA AND HIS GUEST



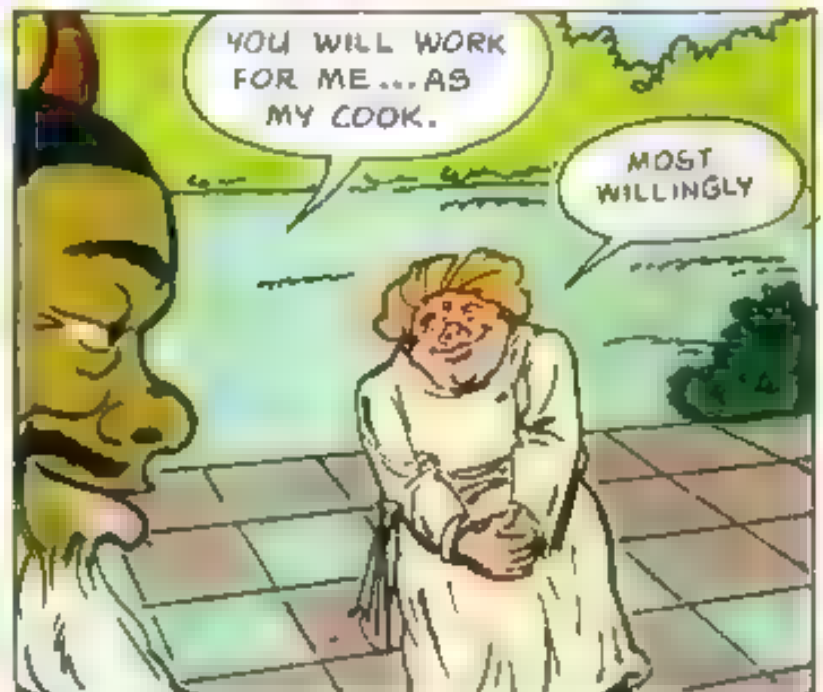
IT WAS LATE IN THE EVENING WHEN A KAYASTHA REACHED THE OUTSKIRTS OF A TOWN











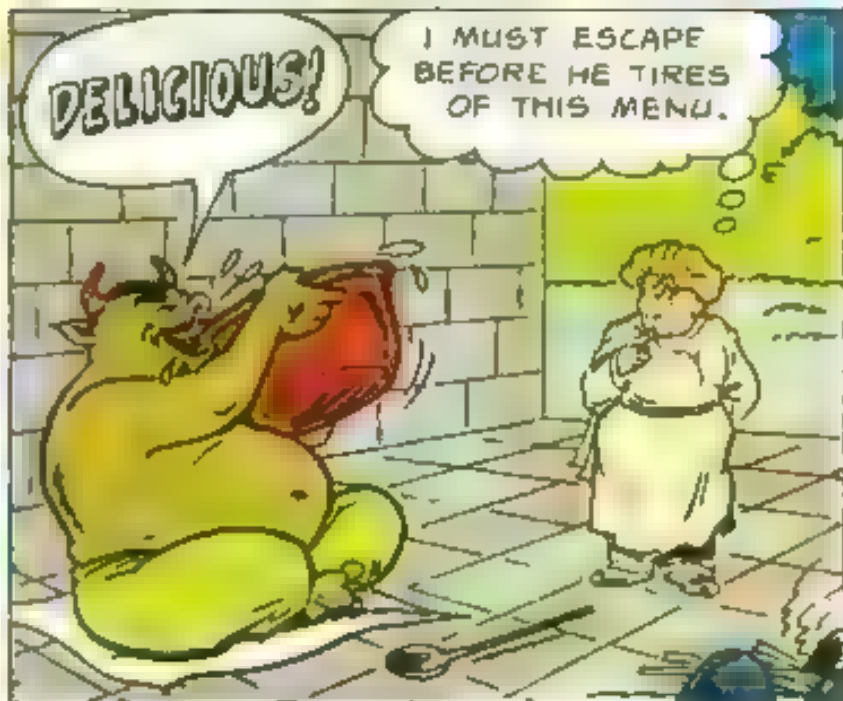


SO THE KAYASTHA SPENT A MONTH WORKING AS A COOK.



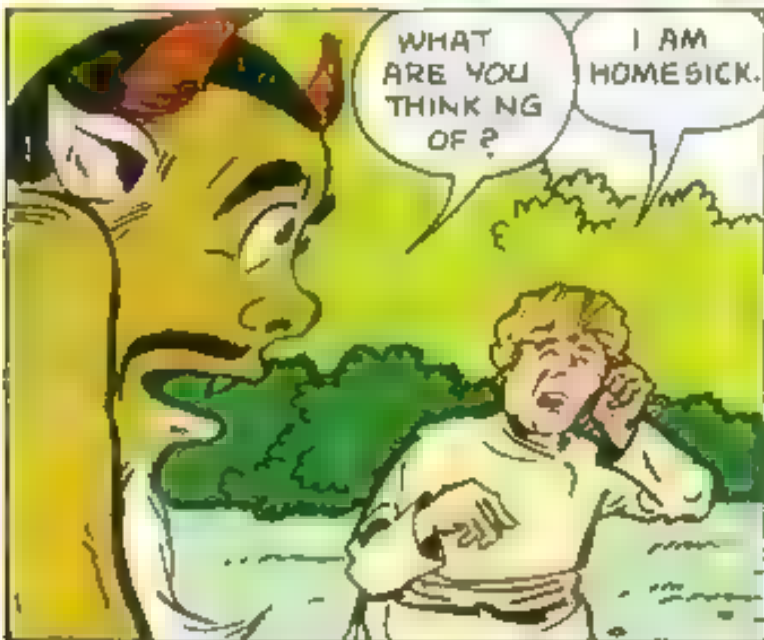
DELICIOUS!

I MUST ESCAPE BEFORE HE TIRES OF THIS MENU.



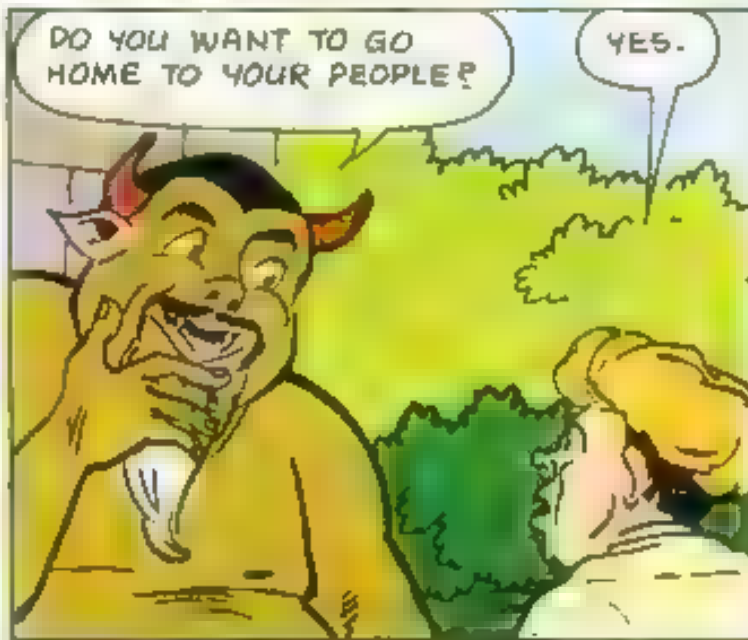
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING OF?

I AM HOMESICK.



DO YOU WANT TO GO HOME TO YOUR PEOPLE?

YES.



ALL RIGHT. GO.



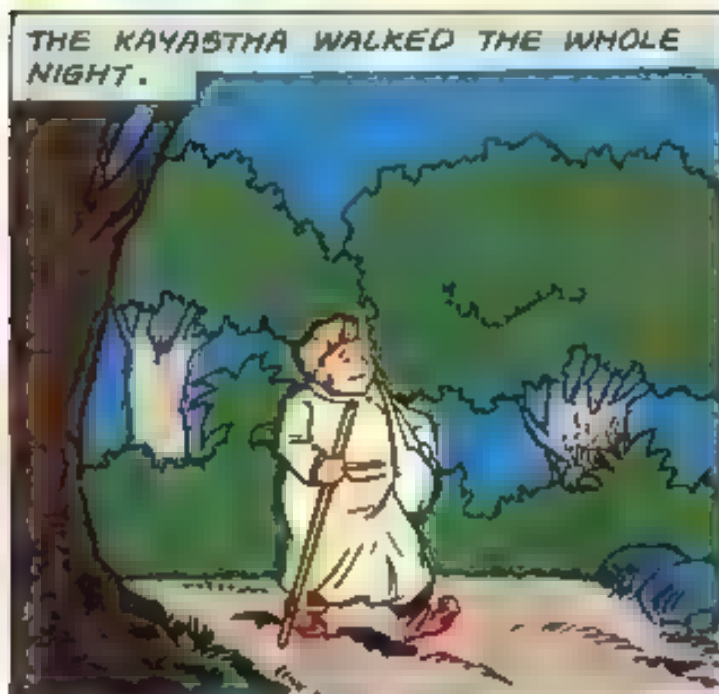
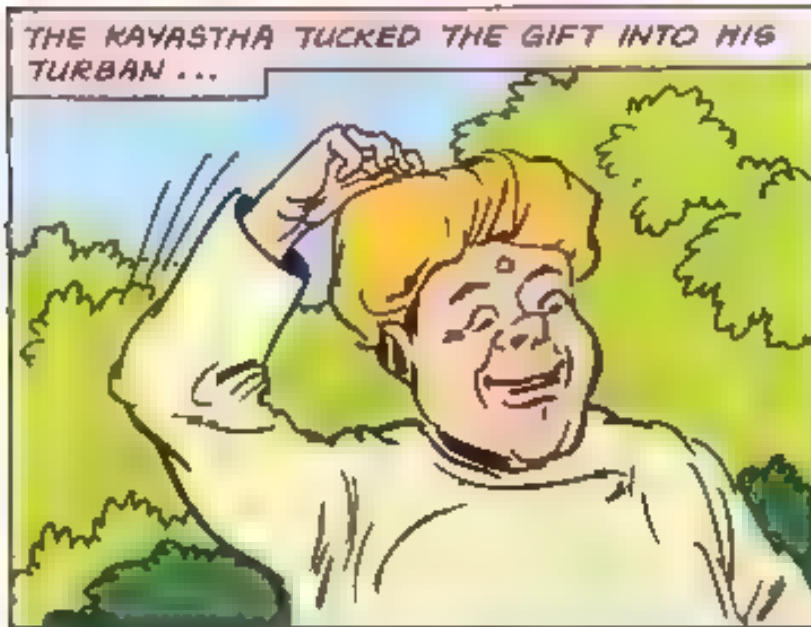
WAIT I MUST GIVE YOU SOMETHING. SOMETHING...



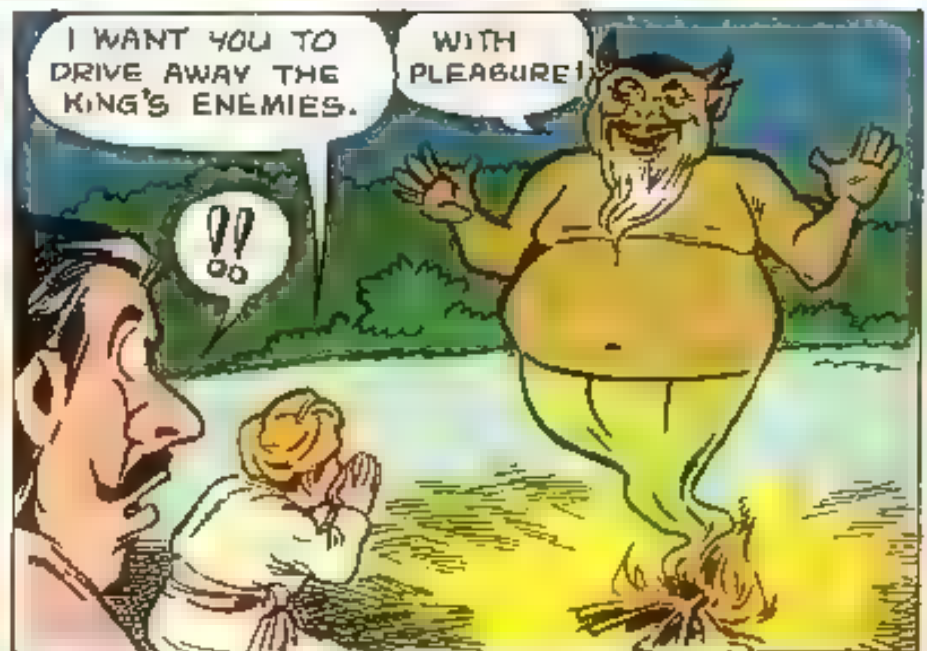
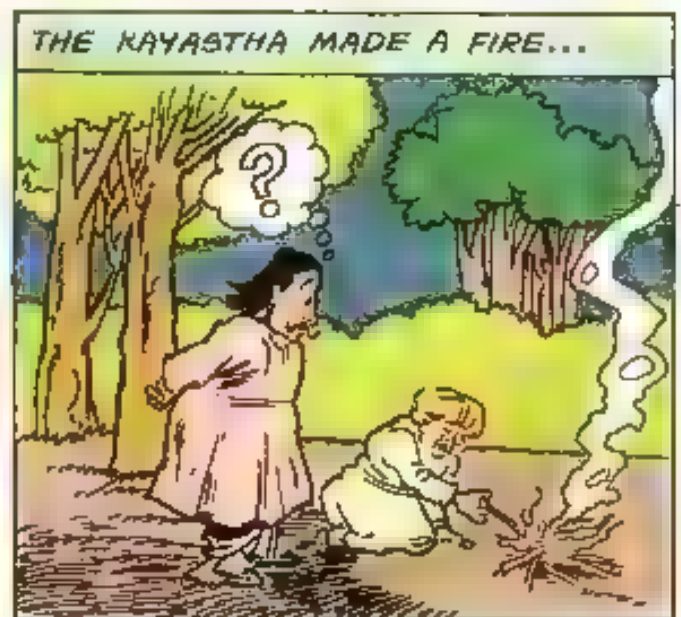
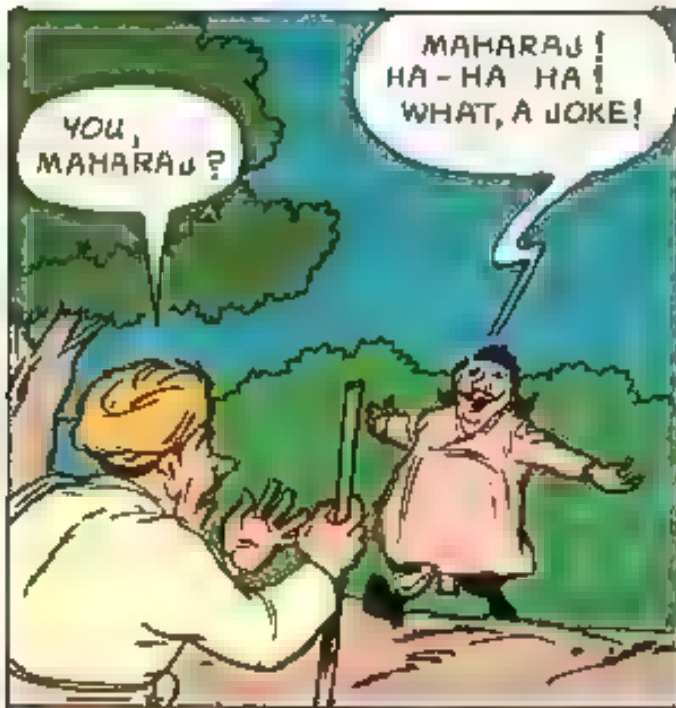
AH..!













AND THE DEMON VANISHED.



AS THE KAYASTHA CONCLUDED THE STRANGE STORY —



THE MEN HOWEVER TURNED OUT TO BE HIS OWN SUBJECTS.



THE KAYASTHA LIVED HAPPILY THEREAFTER.



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